

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing and early and favorable consideration of the subject application on the merits is respectfully requested.

By the present amendment, the specification has been amended to reflect the granting of Applicants' petition to convert the priority application in the instant case to a provisional application. New claims 53 and 54 have been added. These claims, directed to methods and kits, derive support at least from page 19, line 32 to page 20, line 13 and Example 4 (page 33, line 4 to page 35) of the present specification. No new matter has been added.

Election/Restrictions

In response to the Restriction Requirement at page 2 of the Official Action, Applicants hereby elect, albeit with traverse, the claims of Group II, claims 32-52.

The Examiner describes the invention of Group I, claims 1-31, as "a method for isolating genes involved in the determination of a trait or phenotype of plant species, and to a method for isolating essential genes in a plant." The Examiner describes the invention of Group II, claims 32-52, as "a method for introducing inhibitory RNA in the cytoplasm of plant cells and a kit for practicing the method."

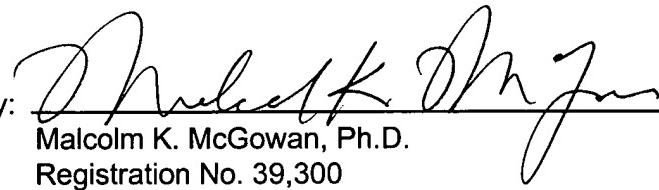
Applicants respectfully submit that at least Group I claims 5 to 13, claim 22, and claims 23-31 include all of the limitations of claim 32, the generic claim of Group II. Specifically, claims 5-13 and 22-31 all recite a viral RNA vector derived from a satellite RNA virus, comprising inhibitory RNA or comprising a chimeric nucleic acid which when transcribed yields inhibitory RNA is introduced into a plant cell; and that corresponding helper virus is introduced into the

plant cell. Accordingly, a complete search for claims 5-13 and 22-31 would necessarily overlap with a the search for claims 32-52. Applicants thus request that claims 5-13 and 22-31 be included in Group II. At the very least, Applicants request that claims 22-31 should be included in Group II.

In the event that there are any questions relating to this paper, or to the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned so that prosecution of this application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment to Reply dated October 19, 2001

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Page 1, Replace the Paragraph Beginning at Line 5

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. provisional application Serial No. 60/219,314, filed April 20, 1999, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.